FACTSHEET

Wildlife Services

United States Department of Agriculture

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

January 1998

National Wildlife Research Center

The National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) functions as the research arm of the Wildlife Service (WS) program in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). Approximately 25 percent of WS' annual budget is spent on research. The Center helps WS manage wildlife populations by providing scientific information on conflicts between humans and wildlife. NWRC research activities emphasize socially acceptable methods that reduce or stop wildlife damage effectively and economically, minimizing risks for humans, wildlife, and the environment.

In existence since the 1920's, the Center is the only research facility in the world devoted exclusively to the study of wildlife damage control. At NWRC and at field stations in 8 States, a staff of 160 employees specializes in wildlife biology, chemistry, animal behavior, physiology, biological and physical science technology, statistics, computer programming, electronic engineering, library science, records management, and support functions.

In addition to its own staff, NWRC relies on individuals with additional specialties through cooperative ties with universities, not-for-profit research facilities, and other public and private research entities. NWRC has achieved an integrated, multidisciplinary research program that is uniquely suited to provide scientific information and solutions to wildlife damage problems.

Specific activities include:

- Assessing damage and other problems caused by wildlife. The problems of wildlife interactions with society extend beyond the farm or ranch. An increasing number of wildlife–human conflicts occur in urban areas—for instance, deer in backyards, raccoons in gardens, squirrels in attics, geese on golf courses, and threats to human safety when birds collide with airplanes and wildlife is struck by automobiles. The full scope of human–animal interactions requires objective examination and evaluation.

- Investigating the biology and behavior of problem animals. Much of what is currently known about coyote biology and behavior is a result of research conducted over many years at the NWRC Predator Research Laboratory at Millville, UT. This research has served as the basis for development and application of many strategies and techniques used today for protecting livestock from predators.

- Evaluating the impact of wildlife management practices on target species, nontarget species, and the environment. The Center designs studies to ensure that the methods developed to alleviate wildlife damage are biologically sound, effective, economical, and safe to the public and the environment.

- Developing and improving technology to reduce wildlife problems. A few examples of current projects include chemosensory repellants and attractants for birds and mammals, methods to reduce bird hazards to aviation, control methods for the brown tree snake in Guam, aversive conditioning to deter egg predators, immunocontraceptive vaccines and delivery systems that may resolve problems caused by wildlife overpopulation, and techniques to reduce bird damage to fish hatcheries and cereal crops.

- Supporting registration of management chemicals and drugs. The Center works closely with the Environmental Protection Agency, other regulatory agencies, chemical registrants, and the private sector. Approved agents are manufactured, stored, and distributed from a USDA supply depot at Pocatello, ID, or by the private sector. The APHIS–WS program uses new and improved chemicals and drugs in its field operations.

- Transferring scientific and technical information. The Center maintains a scientific library of publications and research papers and makes its materials available to other researchers. Like all Federal organizations, NWRC maintains an open-door policy and welcomes inquiries. For more information, visit or write to the Center at:

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You may also telephone the Center at (970) 223–1588, or visit our web site (http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ws/nwrc).